

STEERING COMMITTEE
COASTAL RISKS AND HAZARDS COMMISSION

Friday, May 8, 2015
9:00AM – 11:00AM

NHDES Portsmouth Regional Office
Pease International Tradeport
222 International Drive, Suite 175
Portsmouth, NH

DRAFT MINUTES

Attending: Senator Nancy Stiles, Senator David Watters, Jennifer Gilbert (NHOEP), Kirsten Howard (NHDES), Paul Kirshen (UNH), Ann Scholz (NHDOT), Roger Stephenson (Stratham), and Chairman Cliff Sinnott (RPC),

Commission Chair Cliff Sinnott began the meeting at 9:06 AM.

1. Welcome

Chairman Cliff Sinnott welcomed everyone.

2. CRHC & Steering Committee Membership Update

Cliff gave a membership update regarding NH Department of Environmental Services' representative. Their new representative will be Sherry Godlewski, who has been attending as the alternate. Steve Couture will now be the alternate.

3. Approval of Minutes from March 6, 2015 and April 3, 2015 Meetings

A motion by Senator Watters was made to accept the Committee's minutes of March 6, 2015. The motion was seconded by Senator Stiles. All approved.

A motion by Senator Watters was made to accept the Committee's minutes of April 3, 2015. The motion was seconded by Senator Stiles. All approved.

4. Federal Flood Risk Management Standard: CRHC comments provided to Governor's Office

Following the April 3 Committee meeting, Cliff and Senator Watters put together comments and gave them to Kerry McHugh of the Governor's office. The Governor's office decided that it would be best for the Office of Energy and Planning to submit the comments on behalf of the Commission, which was done by the comment submittal deadline of May 6, 2015. The coordination with the Governor's office was a good step forward for making them aware of the Commission's work.

Cliff will send the comments that were submitted to the Commission members and ask the state agency representatives to forward on to their commissioners.

Senator Watters will take the lead on developing a press release regarding the Commission submitting comments.

The Commission's comments will also be shared with Senator Ayotte's office, whom Roger has been working with, and with Congressmen Guinta's office, as suggested by Senator Watters.

Ann stated that the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) submitted seven pages of comments. She stated that there appears to be no conflict with the Commission's comments.

5. Is it within our ability and scope to make specific recommendations about the seawall in Hampton (e.g height, configuration)? How should we approach that?

The Hampton seawall was built in 1936 and this is its first repair. The repairs will be finished in June. The town is asking how high to build the seawall. Senator Stiles would like to get feedback from the Committee.

Below is a summary of the discussion:

- Kirsten stated that the DES Coastal Program is looking to hire an intern, who will conduct an inventory of the seawalls along the coast.
- Need a comprehensive shoreland management plan.
- Suggest a range based on the Scientific Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) report.
- Need a troubleshooting guide or decision tree showing the problem to the appropriate guidance.
- An engineer would need to look at the STAP report and decide how high.
- Recommendation for state agencies to include sea level rise – need for a state statute.
- DES Wetlands Bureau will be revising their rules in the next couple of years.
- Develop a workgroup to give guidance on hardening/seawalls.
- Massachusetts has done an assessment of hardening structures with a lot of detail.
- Ann shared a map of seawalls along the coast that someone from DOT put together. She emailed a pdf copy of this map to the Committee.
- Kirsten mentioned a project by the NH Geological Survey that will look at shoreline changes using LiDAR from 2004 to 2011. She will contact them about doing a presentation for the Commission.

The Committee agreed that we need to take a second look at the recommendations regarding shoreline to expand or add based on today's discussion. The Hampton seawall could be a case study of what should be considered.

6. Discussion of Next Steps and Assignments

a. Recommendations

- More details (i.e. who, when, priority) are still needed for the recommendations.
- Need to develop an overview of the recommendations.
- Kirsten and Julie will work together on breakout the recommendations for legislative, municipal, and state.

b. Communication & Outreach

- Cameron Wake (UNH) recently re-released the STAP report.
- Roger discussed what the Commission's goals are and what we want from our audience (i.e. Selectmen – support). Need measurable objective by a certain timeframe. The goal for all audiences is awareness and understanding. It was proposed that the goals and audiences be discussed as part of the full Commission and the objectives be discussed in small groups and then everyone is brought back together to discuss.

7. Draft Report – Initial Discussion

a. Content, form, format

Cliff distributed a draft outline of the report. During the discussion, it was proposed that item #8 (Vulnerability Assessment) be included under Item #7 (Findings).

A proposed title of the report: Coastal Risks and Hazards: Storm Surge, Extreme Precipitation, and Sea Level Rise – A Draft Report of the Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission.

The group discussed applying for a Charitable Foundation grant to assist with writing and publishing the report. Roger will talk to them.

In the introduction section, it was suggested that the scope of the Commission be explained, such as why public health was not addressed. Explain what we didn't do.

In the appendices, possibly follow the Maryland report, which included technical tools. Also, include a troubleshooting guide.

8. Other Business

a. May & June Commission agendas

Cliff proposed cancelling the Commission's May 15 meeting. All agreed.

The group discussed the need to reschedule the Commission's June 19 meeting for June 12. June 19 is date for the Coastal NH Climate Summit in Greenland. Senator Waters and Stiles and Cliff will each talk for 5 minutes each during a session at the Summit. Roger will develop talking points for each of them.

For the June 12 Commission meeting, municipal representatives will be asked to invite an appropriate local official from their municipality to attend the meeting. During the first 90 minutes of the meeting, there will be a quick summary of the STAP report and a summary of the Commission's recommendations. The invited local officials will then be given the opportunity to leave. The remaining 90 minutes of the meeting will include a discussion lead by Roger of the Commission's outreach and communications.

Cliff will send an email to the Commission members about no May meeting and for municipal representatives to recruit someone for the June 12 meeting.

The USGS presentation will be held at a later meeting.

A coastal walking tour was proposed for September.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on June 5 from 2 to 4 PM. Discussion at the meeting will include the recommendations and designing a questionnaire.

b. Other

Roger discussed the upcoming coastal conference that will be held October 24 and 25, 2015 at the Ashworth Hotel in Hampton. States along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts are invited to attend. Discussed having Commission members on a panel and doing a walking tour.

9. Public Comment

None.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.

Meeting notes prepared by:
Jennifer Gilbert, Commission Clerk